

Last 25 minutes outside I was feeling scared. I was scared because I thought they were going to fire Mrs. Black. An I didn't want that to happen. It really looked liked it because another teacher came in here to sub Mrs. Black. That's what I thought also because Mrs. Black looked angry when she walked out of the door.

Memorandum

To: Charley Kenty, PSS Human Resources
From: Ms. Black, HJHS Life Skills Teacher
Date: 04/22/05
Re: Harassment Incident

ATTACHMENT 0

Dear Mr. Kenty,

This morning, a situation occurred that I can only define as harassment on the part of the Acting Principal, Mr. Brewer. I came to school as I always do. I usually park near the canteen so I can go to the office and sign-in, and speak with any colleagues I need to speak with before the start of the day. Then I drive out to the far side of campus where my classroom is.

When I arrived this morning, I parked at the canteen as usual. As I was walking towards the office, I saw my colleagues Ms. Brel and Ms. Sikyang. We gave each other a group hug, and began talking about school issues. As we finished up our conversation, I was walking away and Mr. Brewer stormed past us. I went to the office as always, signed in, and had a conversation with other colleagues. I attempted to read everything written on the board, check for announcements, speak with Ms. Terry about a student, and head over to class.

Upon arrival to my class, Mr. Brewer and Mr. Gagaring were standing at the corner of Building V behind my students. I said, "Good morning gentlemen" and received no response. My students were lined up waiting for the late bell and to come into class. I unlocked the door and was about to let them into my classroom, but when I turned around, Mr. Brewer was standing there. He told my students to wait outside and came in my room. His facial expression was angry and his body language was intimidating. I could tell my students were worried. I was also worried, because of his temper and I was afraid that he had heard I was filing a formal grievance against him and would retaliate.

I went into my classroom with Mr. Brewer and Mr. Gagaring. Mr. Brewer began pulling out papers. He handed me one, and asked me to sign another one. On many occasions, I have asked Mr. Brewer to allow Mr. Gagaring and a teacher, Ms. Brel, to sit in on any meetings we had. In the past, he has become so angry with me and lashed out at me that I've been concerned for my safety. I have expressed this to him both verbally and in writing. I was not comfortable being in my classroom alone with him and Mr. Gagaring, and was upset that whatever this was about had to take place when I was beginning class. I told him I would not sign anything until I had had an opportunity to read it, and that right then, my focus of course was on the students waiting outside of my room. He told me to sit down and read it and that he would take care of my students. I felt very uncomfortable and intimidated, and worried about my students. I also began to worry about my own safety, as it was obvious Mr. Brewer was becoming angry. (His face turns beet red).

After attempting to read the letter at my desk, I realized I couldn't focus because of my fear for both myself and my students. I told Mr. Brewer that I couldn't take care of this now and asked him if I could meet him during my lunch. He said "no". Was this paper so important that instructional time had to be taken away? I asked him if I could get a teacher representative to be with us, and again he said "no". I told him that I was very uncomfortable and that I didn't feel safe meeting with him. He said we weren't having a meeting. (Would be curious as to his definition of meeting!). I told him that I did not want to meet with him at that time and felt it was inappropriate that he was coming during my class. I also asked him why he hadn't mentioned meeting with me when I had seen him 15 or 20 minutes prior? He would not answer.

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I then told him I could not take care of the issue at that time, and opened the door to let my students in. He came over, and said to them, "Wait outside folks!". I came back in, then felt extremely uncomfortable and afraid. I walked out of my classroom, and went over to speak with Ms. Brel. She recommended I call the police. I saw Mr. Ferrari and spoke with him, and he advised I go back to my room and take my students to the library if Mr. Brewer would not leave my room.

At that time, I went back to my classroom, extremely afraid, but more worried about my students. I went in my classroom, and both Mr. Brewer and Mr. Gagaring had left. Ms. Quinata was with my students. I thanked her and she left. I then asked my students if they were ok. They said they were, but that they were afraid. Mr. Ron, the paraprofessional, came in and spoke with me outside the class. He asked if I was ok, and I told him I wasn't, but that I was trying to be because the students were scared. He wanted to give me a hug, but I wouldn't let him because it would have made me cry. When I went back in the classroom, I gave the students the opportunity to write down what had happened and how they felt. (I have that documentation, and most of them were scared. Many of them also interpreted Mr. Brewer's anger, aggressiveness, and body language as a message that I was going to be fired). We discussed the situation and I tried to assure the students that it was ok and they were not in trouble for anything. I had been so afraid, when I was talking to my class, my face and neck had broken out in splotches. (According to the students). It was also obvious I was having a difficult time in controlling my emotions and not crying! At lunch break, I went to find a phone. I used Ms. Sikyang's office to call Legal Counsel but no one was available. I was afraid Mr. Brewer would come back and threaten me more. I then called you and spoke with you. Because of my fear and the lack of professionalism on Mr. Brewer's part, I had to go home sick at lunch.

Mr. Kenty, the fact that Mr. Brewer continues to be aggressive towards me and unprofessional is bad enough. But this situation ended up involving my students. That is completely unacceptable! I'm sure Mr. Brewer will attempt to minimize his negative role in this situation. He may try. But the bottom line is I have over 20 witnesses and statements to the contrary. According to the PSS Regulations for Certified Personnel, the following policies sections were not adhered to:

- 3405 – Cruelty to Students: “ 2) Psychological Harm: Teachers are forbidden to engage in any act of psychological cruelty which inflicts emotional trauma on a student.”
All of these students were traumatized.
- 6104 – Harassment Defined: “ a) Verbal or physical conduct towards a person based on any of the factors listed in 6102 which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment constitutes harassment.”

Without a doubt, I experienced harassment from Mr. Brewer, as did my students.

Frankly, Mr. Kenty, I am afraid for my safety and for my students' safety. At what point is an administrator held accountable for his actions? The entire staff has seen Mr. Brewer when he becomes angry, and many of them are frightened. Several times he has become angry in meetings, and has stormed out and left campus. I have expressed my fear of Mr. Brewer directly to him, to you and to PSS Legal Counsel, yet Mr. Brewer continues to have me meet with him one on one or with Mr. Gagaring, but not with my teacher rep. I cannot teach with this constant fear of continued harassment and request something be done about it.

Sincerely,

Lisa Black

cc.: PSS Legal Counsel

*Copy -
JL
4/27/05*

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ATTACHMENT P

To: Mr. Brewer
From: Ms. Black
Date: January 14, 2005
Re: Various Documents

Dear Mr. Brewer,

Will you please provide me with copies of the following items at your earliest convenience? (If the copy machine is not working, I have a copy machine I can bring in from home.) Thank you!

- Both of my classroom evaluations from this year
- The letter Ms. Manahane wrote in reference to her view of what happened in her classroom when I came in prior to Christmas break.
- The letter Sam Nepaial wrote in reference to the same occurrence as above.
- Staff meeting notes for the meetings we have had this year.

If, for any reason, you have a question or there are any problems, please write a memo and leave it in my box. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Lisa S. Black

Lisa Black

*Submitted to Mr. Brewer's mailbox
1/14/05*

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ATTACHMENT ①



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT
HONOLULU, HAWAII
96813-2000

Hopwood Jr. High School



MEMORANDUM

TO: Ms. Black

FROM: Acting Principal

Subject: Requested Documents

Reference: Memos of 1-14 & 1-20

Taken in your order:

1. Classroom evaluations—we have documentation of only one formal classroom observation. This was done on August 31 by me. We discussed my impressions on September 2 and you signed the observation document. I am sure I gave you copy, but will provide you with another (attached).
2. Ms. Manahane's letter—as noted during our discussion on 1-12-05 you were told that I would not share that letter with you.
3. Sam Nepaial's letter—as in #2 above
4. Staff meeting minutes—S. Crisostimo is the "keeper" of those minutes. She was ill most of last week and has been getting her grades to the Registrar since her return. I will provide you with the minutes as soon as she can get them together. Like all teachers, her first responsibility is to her students. Do not confront her about this matter.

In re #2 & #3—because a formal reprimand is not considered discipline "rules of evidence", opportunities to confront witnesses or review documents do not apply. In the interest of fair play I told you the general tone of the letters and you gave me your response(s).

Respectfully,

Jill Brewer

*Recd. 1/21/05
3:30 PM
J. Black*

.... Home of the Hilitai
"We Make Everyday the Best"

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